

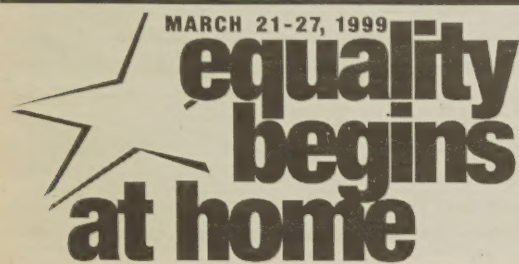


The EQUAL Times

The Newsletter of Equality Colorado

Spring '99
Vol. 6, No. 2

PO Box 300476 • Denver, CO 80203 • (303) 839-5540
(888) 557-4441 toll-free • (303) 839-1361 fax • (719) 227-8545 in Colo. Springs •
in Grand Junction (970) 242-8949
equalityco@aol.com • www.members.tde.com/~equality



Nick Sarchet

Equality Begins at Home, Finally Begins!

You've read about it, you've heard about and if you're like me you've dreamt about it!!! Yes, I am talking about that empowering set of local, state and national actions referred to as Equality Begins at Home. For those of you who are new to Equality Colorado, new to the queer activist community or have just plain been asleep the last few months, EBAH is an opportunity to get involved with the fight for GLBT rights wherever you call home. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, in conjunction with the Federation of LGBT Statewide Political Organizations, is helping to organize a nationally coordinated set of actions to bring attention to the fight for queer rights in the places we call home.

Home is not just where the heart is...home is whatever and wherever you choose to define it. Home is your state, your county, your city, your workplace, your school, your neighborhood, your friends, your family, your community. The GLBT community is so diverse and the issues that are important to us vary from state to state and community to community. EBAH gives

everyone a chance to raise awareness around issues that are important to them and relevant to wherever they call home.

The events and actions that are scheduled for Colorado are quite varied as you can see by the adjoining schedule. While I hope that you will come to ALL the events, I understand it is not realistic so let me highlight some of the key events.

"Rally Against Hate" will be a public show of support for the Hate Crimes bill that will be going before the House Appropriations committee in early April. Immediately following the rally there will be a community forum on GLBT families called "Protecting Our Families." Paula Ettelbrick, a nationally known family law expert and CLIP's new staff Attorney, Kathleen Kern, will be the chief presenters along with a clergy person and a GLBT family.

The Youth Rally on Sunday is a great place to show your support for all GLBTQ youth attending schools and colleges in Colorado. Come and listen to the stories and concerns of Colorado's fabulous queer youth! Another great event to attend is "Who Put the 'T' in my GLB?!" This is an excellent opportunity to learn about the transgender community through an overview of terminology, a diverse panel of speakers and a Q & A period.

Remember that your presence is needed to make this week a success. Show your support and concern for the issues that affect the lives of GLBT people daily. You CAN make a difference!

"Faces of Legislation"

Joanna C. Dueñas

All across America, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community is celebrating our families and relationships more openly. Choosing to have children (through adoption, foster care or biologically), having commitment ceremonies, and protecting our relationships (as best we can without the legal protections), are growing evidence of our insistence that our families are important and warrant the same respect and recognition as all other families in our communities.

As communities around the country prepare to launch their Equality Begins At Home (EBAH) initiatives, we thought it would be especially important to highlight one of Colorado's EBAH projects, the "Faces of Legislation" project.

The "Faces of Legislation" project is our attempt to put faces on the issue of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. We have been soliciting pictures of people affected by anti-gay legislation or by the lack of legislation aimed at protecting us and our families. Legislators need to be reminded that we too are their constituents and that we deserve to be represented.

Decisions made by legislators affect all of us and our families. We want your story (and picture) whether you are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender yourself, whether you are a parent, sibling or friend of someone who is GLBT, or whether you simply care deeply about these issues. We want to show legislators who our families are and tell the stories about our lives.

By the time you receive this newsletter, our first year's project would have been compiled. But we still need and want your stories for successive legislative sessions because we know the battles to secure our equal rights will rage on for years to come.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy the stories of five of the many families participating in the Faces of Legislation Project (see pages 6 & 7). You may see yourselves reflected in their stories, or perhaps are contemplating starting a family of your own. We're out there. We're everywhere and more and more of us are insisting on living our lives with all the affirmation we deserve!

For more information about "Faces of Legislation," contact Equality Colorado's main number, 303.839.5540.

Equality Begins At Home!

Schedule of Events

Saturday, March 20: "Spring Into Equality" • Colorado Springs, 8 pm, Pride Center • Grand Junction, 5 pm, Jitters.

Sunday, March 21: "Actions for Faith" • Youth Rally, 12 pm, State Capitol • Youth Lobby Training, 2 pm, Rainbow Alley • Rally at Rotary Park in Durango

Monday, March 22: Youth Lobby Day • Book study series on Bawer's book, "Stealing Jesus," begins in Colorado Springs.

Tuesday, March 23: "Faces of Legislation" project at the capitol.

Wednesday, March 24: Marriage license action at County Clerk offices • "Who Put the 'T' in my GLB?" forum to educate the GLB community on trans issues.

Thursday, March 25: Thursday in Black • "Rally Against Hate," 6pm, State Capitol • "Protecting Our Families," 7pm, 1600 Grant [Denver].

Friday, March 26: "No Hate" day in schools, universities and workplaces.

Saturday, March 27: Candidate information night at the Waterhouse, Colorado Springs, 7pm.

For more information
contact Nick at 303-839-5540
or ecsarchet@aol.com

Save the Date!

2nd Annual Pride Awards

June 26, 1999

Contact Joanna at 303-839-5540
or email ecduenas

Director's Cut

by Sue Anderson

Equality Does Begin At Home

Equality begins at home. It really does begin here, in our homes, with our families, in our neighborhoods, at our workplaces, in our churches and in our state legislatures. It also begins here in this movement for change. If we have basic equality and fairness at the most personal level, we are safer to live our lives with dignity and without fear. This is fundamentally what Equality Colorado's work is about. Whether we are helping victims of crime, offering classes in personal safety, training law enforcement officers to serve us better, helping faith communities address sexuality issues, providing support to community activists or working with elected officials to ensure fair public policies, we are working here at home to secure equality in all aspects of our lives.

It is too easy to direct attacks within our movement than challenging the external forces that really need challenging.

Equality Begins at Home, a series of nationally coordinated actions by GLBT organizations and our friends, is taking place at the end of March. Equality Colorado is participating in these actions as a member of the Federation of Statewide GLBT Political Organizations along with our counterparts in every state across the country. Why? We hope to call attention to work for change happening in our own states and communities. Change has to happen at ALL levels – it won't happen in Congress without a groundswell of support and pressure from constituents back home. It won't happen at the State Capitol without pressure from constituents all over the state. It won't happen in workplaces without workers organizing to make it happen and it won't happen in churches, synagogues and temples without people of faith speaking out. It will happen only when all of us work together to create change.

That last statement about all of us working together is really the challenge. In this movement for justice that is focused on GLBT issues, we are faced with some unique challenges. We are a movement of people that often have very little in common. We cross all race, age, class, gender, political, ability and geographic lines. The only thing that some of us really have in common is our experiences of homophobia in the world as GLBT people or as allies and, I hope, a desire to see justice in the world.

I often think of our movement as a coalition movement where we sometimes agree and sometimes don't. We don't all believe in the same strategies or even in the same end goals. We may have very different ideas about how to get there. We may be trying to build a stronger movement while others are trying to win the most votes all in the name of equality and justice for all. Those different strategies don't have to be mutually exclusive, but often lead people down

different paths. That's okay. People often tell me that we won't get anywhere unless we are united and "all on the same page." Much as I would love to see that happen, I don't think it will. But that's okay.

We don't have to agree all of the time, but what we do need to do is figure out how to work collaboratively without doing harm to each other within the movement, or outside of the movement for that matter. Too often I see people become angry with people within this movement and work actively to harm or destroy those individuals or their organizations. It is too easy to direct attacks within our movement than to challenge the external forces that really need challenging. We've seen that phenomenon in every social movement and the GLBT movement is no exception.

We can do better than to destroy ourselves. We can work to ensure that equality does begin at home, right here in this movement for change. We can work to ensure that when we disagree, we challenge each other in useful, direct and helpful ways. We can agree to disagree. We can pick and choose when we work together and when we don't. We've seen that with the Equality Begins at Home actions around the country. Different groups are planning very different events depending on what they need. Right here in Colorado, we are organizing everything from a youth lobby day to a rally against hate to faith communities in action to a community forum on GLBT family issues. So pick what works for you and get involved. Action is the key to creating change, so let's make it positive action because Equality DOES begin at home.

We Want To Thank You!

We want to thank the following volunteers, the "family" that helps us get the mailings out, the stories written, the clippings filed, the data entry updated, the computers running smoothly, and the special events staffed. We are forever grateful for your help.

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The Equal Times is the newsletter of Equality Colorado. Equality Colorado's mission is to work to secure equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. We seek to create an environment where people are respected, open dialogue is encouraged and the truth is spoken about the diversity of our families and sexual identities.

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Editor: Joanna Dueñas
Contributors: Sue Anderson, Dede de Percin, Joanna Dueñas, Nick Sarchet, Deryk Tyler Standing, Matt Kailey, Moshe Rozdzial, Kevin Maly, Elfriede Leicht, Sally Jo Button

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PO Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203
phone (303) 839-5540 • fax (303) 839-1361

ARAPAHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
5886 S. Court Place, Littleton CO 80120-1200

Sheriff Patrick J. Sullivan, Jr.

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MPN COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARCH - JUNE 1999



The Metro Pride Network is a coalition of organizations that gathers every three months to meet other community leaders, share upcoming events, and develop a metro-area-wide community calendar. All GLBT and allied organizations in the Denver-Boulder metro area are welcome to become members, and submit their meetings and events to future MPN calendars.

Membership is \$10 for a listing on the back page, \$25 for listing & events. To join, contact Nick at Equality Colorado, 303-839-5540 x4, ecsarchet@aol.com.

The next meeting of the Metro Pride Network will be **Tuesday, May 11 from 6:30 - 8:30**

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

March 18 - Jewels, Jokes and Justice Too Annual fundraising event for CLIP, featuring entertainment, food, drink and an auction. 6-9:30 pm. Tickets \$30, patrons \$60. 303-830-2100.

March 20 - AIDS 101 sponsored by CAP. 303-837-0166 x301.

March 20 - Spring Into Equality Equality Begins at Home kick-off parties throughout the state, including:

Grand Junction 970-242-8949
Colorado Springs 719-227-8545

March 21-27 - Equality Begins at Home Local, statewide, and national actions promoting justice for GLBT people.

March 21 - Youth Rally and Lobby Training
Voices of Faith Actions

March 22 - Youth Lobby Day at the Capitol

March 23 - "Faces of Legislation"

March 24 - County Clerk Marriage Action

March 25 - Thursday in Black, "Rally Against Hate" and "Protecting Our Families"

March 26 - Colorado "No Hate Day"

Sponsored by Equality Colorado and the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force. Call Nick at 303-839-5540 x4.

March 25 - CBC Social Mixer 6 pm at OutFront Colorado. 303-595-8042.

March 27 - "Celebrate Spring Fever" Denver Gay Men's Chorus Concert featuring Coro Voce and Applause. 8 pm. Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia, Denver. 303-832-DGMC.

March 29 - GLBCSCC Annual Membership Meeting Rainbow Alley, 919 E. 14 at 6:00 pm. 303-831-6268.

March 30 - Pride, Passion, Performance: A Lesbian Literary and Creative Arts Symposium Guests: Barbara Smith, Graciela Sanchez, Shoshana Rosenfield and Lisa Lusero. 9:30 am - 4:45 pm at St. Cajetan's on the Auraria campus. 303-556-6333.

APRIL

April - AVP Crisis Line Training Call 303-839-5540.

April 4 - CBC Luncheon with special guest Tom Dearth. Lunch at Charlie's, 11 am. Cost \$15 for members, \$20 guests. 303-595-8042.

April 10 - Lambda Rising Queer Academic Conference at CU Boulder. 303-492-1377.

April 17 - AIDS 101 sponsored by CAP. 303-837-0166 x301.

April 22 - CBC Business Fair 5-9 pm at the Tivoli. 303-595-8042.

April 23 - The Two-Spirited: Reliving and Reclaiming a Life Lost A presentation on traditional two-spirit people of past and present by David Young. 11 am - 1 pm in Tivoli 320A on the Auraria campus. 303-556-6333.

April 23-25 - Lesbian Rights Conference Sponsored by National Organization for Women. 202-331-0066 x705

April 30 - Miss GIC Pageant 1999-2000 Compete in day wear, evening wear and talent for this important title and fundraising function! 10:30 pm at B.J.'s Carousel. 303-202-6466.

MAY

May 1 - Derby Day Brunch 1-5 pm. Join BCAP for a southern style buffet complete with Mint Juleps, a contest for best decorated hat, and prizes for the person(s) who pick the Derby winner. Cost is \$40. 303-444-6121.

May 1 - Team Colorado's Annual Spaghetti Dinner at MCC of the Rockies (10th and Clarkson). 5 - 9 pm. Tickets available from The Book Garden, Category Six or by calling 303-629-9GAY.

May 8 - PFLAG Denver, 4th Annual Awards Dinner Reception at 6 pm, dinner at 7 pm followed by presentation of awards. 303-573-5861.

May 13 - CBC Luncheon with special guest Don Mares. Lunch at Charlie's, 11 am. Cost \$15 for members, \$20 guests. 303-595-8042.

May 14 - Youth Rally on the Capitol steps at noon. 303-831-0442.

May 14 - Queer Prom IV at the Tivoli. 303-831-0442.

May 15 - AIDS 101 sponsored by CAP. 303-837-0166 x301.

May 22 - Melissa Chapman Award dinner sponsored by the Gender Identity Center. 303-202-6466.

May 22 - Bark at the Park Denver's Canine Carnival to support the Center's Lesbian Cancer Support Services. 303-448-5558.

May 27 - CBC Social Mixer 6 pm at Caring Hands Chiropractic. 303-595-8042.

May 27 - After Stonewall benefit screening, featuring local activists Sue Anderson, Hope Artichoker, Leslie Durgin and Wayne Jakino. 7 pm at the Tivoli followed by reception at Charlie's at 9 pm. Cost: \$10 for movie, \$3 parking at reception. 303-839-5540.

JUNE

June 4-5 - "Celebrate the Life Experience: The Circle of Life" Denver Gay Men's Chorus Summer Concert w/ Sound Circle. 8 pm at Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St., Denver. 303-832-DGMC.

June 11 - Flag Day Affairs Annual PFLAG event. Call 303-573-5861 for more information.

June 19 - A Midsummer Night's Walk First annual Boulder based walk for AIDS and Cancer. Registration at 5 pm, 5K walk steps off at 6:30 pm, followed by concert at the Bandshell. Call BCAP at 303-444-6121 for more information.

June 26 - GLBT Sports Day/Health Fair Sponsored by Team Colorado and the Center, at Cheesman Park. Featuring Volleypalooza sponsored by CGVA 303-331-0025; Rainbow Run 303-629-9GAY; and booths (contact Brett) 303-831-6268.

June 26 - "Celebrate the Experience" Denver Gay Mens Chorus with the Turtle Creek Chorale at Boettcher Concert Hall, the Plex, Denver. 8 pm. 303-832-DGMC.

June 26 - 2nd Annual Pride Awards sponsored by Equality Colorado. Awards reception only and reception + DGMC concert packages also available. 303-839-5540.

June 27 - Denver PrideFest Parade begins 10 am from Cheesman Park to Civic Center Park; Festival in Civic Center Park until 5 pm. Call 303-831-6268.

Voices of Faith

Equality Begins At Home

Let Equality Begin With Me

Kevin Maly

Most people in the United States know something about the story of Adam and Eve and their "fall." Indeed, several generations of American school-children learned to read from a textbook that began with the letter "A," followed by the line "In Adam's fall we sinned all." Common wisdom assumes that in "the fall" Adam and Eve "got down and got dirty." In this case, however, common wisdom has it all wrong. The temptation was not to "act like animals," rather it was to act like gods – to somehow be above it all, no longer "mere" humans made to care for the earth and for one another. In other words this temptation in the garden was a temptation to inequality – to be "king (or queen) of the hill." And we all know that in that game there can be only one "number one" left standing on top. So here is "original sin." But the story gets better (or worse?). God takes a walk in the garden looking for Adam, finds him, and asks him about what's going on. Adam, now wanting to be number one – at any cost – says to God, "Listen, it was the woman's fault, the woman who, by the way, YOU gave me." If blaming the Other doesn't work, blame God. The woman doesn't do much better; she wants to blame someone, anyone to make herself look better and the man has already blamed her, so she blames the serpent. Get it? Not only does each human want to be on top of the hill, but when the reality of that impossibility becomes clear, each one of us humans still wants to make someone lower, to find someone to blame, to get us a scapegoat. "Original sin" is nothing more nor less than wanting to be better than everyone else. The "fall" is an upward fall. It is the desire for inequality. Just as equality begins at home, so too might we say "inequality begins at home," with each of us in our heart of hearts.

We are each of us created with a conscience, that place where we examine our own ways of being. Each day on our journey to a new creation we must carve out a time and place for self-examination, and in that time and in that place weigh out our thoughts and words, weigh out what we have done and what we have failed to do.

Many Christian faith traditions share a common lectionary, or set of readings from the Judaic and Christian Scriptures. These readings for March 21, the first day of the nationwide Equality Begins at Home week, are about rising from a place of death to a new life in God's spirit. In the first reading, the prophet Ezekiel speaks to those in the Valley of the Dry Bones, a place of no life and no hope, and Ezekiel says to them that God will "bring you up from your graves." In the second reading, St. Paul tells how the old life is one that is "hostile to God," but new life in Christ is life in the Spirit. And the third reading, the Holy Gospel, tells of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. All these readings are about new life in the here and now, about no longer living in the deadly ways of our original "disobedience." These readings are a call to put away our deadly ways, to put away our desires for inequality – our

desires to be number one, our desires to look for the Other whom we can make into the scapegoat to preserve our particular privilege of the day. This is a call to restoration, to become as we were created – down-to-earth creatures, made to care for the earth, to care for one another, and to enjoy a good creation. Or, to put it another way, this is a call to equality, beginning at home, a call to equality for each one of us in our own hearts.

New life, of course, never happens on its own. People of faith believe that the Creator does, however, provide means for living a new life. One of these means is community. We have one another. We are here to remind each other of the hope for a new creation where there will be, in

words of the prophet Isaiah, "equity for the meek of the earth," where "the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together," and "they will not hurt or destroy on all [God's] holy mountain." And we join our hopes together and we work together that God's will be done on earth, this earth, here, now. When the going gets ugly, as it always does, we are there for one another, to pick one another up as we fall into our old ways. We rally one another with our words and with our examples. And we continually forgive one another our missteps along the way, that our wrongs may not imprison us but become instructive for all of us.

Equality, however, ultimately begins at home. Here too, the Creator gives us means for living a new life. We are each of us created with a conscience, that place where we examine our own ways of being. Each day on our journey to a new creation we must carve out a time and place for self-examination, and in that time and in that place weigh out our thoughts and words, weigh out what we have done and what we have failed to do. And then we must cast off all that weighs on the side of "me and mine first," all that weighs on the side of blaming the Other; and then we must step out every day into a new day, thinking, speaking, and working for a new life of equality and justice for all . . . no exceptions.

Anti-Semitism and Heterosexism: Common Constructs of Oppression

Moshe Rozdial

All oppressions, borne of misinformation directed towards the "Other" in our society, have common roots. In every case the goal is the unjust, destructive, and unequal distribution of power. And although there is no specific hierarchy of oppression, the context in which it manifests itself -- history, economics, or politics -- makes some forms thereof more closely related than others.

I propose that the elements that define the oppression of homosexuals -- heterosexism and homophobia -- are directly analogous to the elements that define the oppression of Jews -- anti-Semitism. To understand the former while disregarding the latter is to overlook the most potent of historical lessons. More precisely, I believe that these two oppressions share many elements that are deeply rooted in the psyche of our culture, and since anti-Semitism has gone underground and heterosexism has become institutionalized, the hatred and scapegoating of Jews has, almost effortlessly, been transferred to homosexuals.

Homosexuals and Jews are feared and despised not because they can be identified as outwardly different, but precisely because of the relative ease with which both can be disguised. Both groups share the capacity to "pass," as either straight or gentile, respectively, and therefore become objects of suspicion and even sources of conspiracy. This has resonance especially in connection with the fear that centers upon children; homosexuals are viewed not only as furtive perpetrators of pedophilia, but as proselytizers of the gay "lifestyle." These fears echo the blood libel and kidnapping charges of historic anti-Semitism, when Jews were accused of the ritual slaughter of Christian children. This was seen in this country in the trial of the Rosenbergs and in the recent murder of Dr. Slepian.

Within the psychology of group hatred both Jews and homosexuals are viewed as wielders of political and economic power. Under the scrutiny of the prejudiced eye, they are charged with promoting "special rights" and are blamed for social ills and misfortunes.

These same accusing voices, that exclude those without power in the political arena, would never deny the overwhelming majority power of their collective political voice. Institutionalized Christianity and heterosexuality wield power through legislation that enshrines Christian religious holidays, sensibilities, and morality in a nominally secular state, and to heterosexual privilege through the protection of marital, inheritance, parental, taxation and military rights: privileges normalized as majority rights.

see page 9

VOICES OF FAITH

PRESENTS

ANOTHER BOOK STUDY!
In Denver, 7.30-9.00 PM
May 3,10,17,24

Peter Gomes' *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart*

"The best contemporary book on the Bible for thoughtful people."

Call Kevin @ Voices of Faith, 303-839-5540
for information and registration.

Anti-Violence Project

Equality Begins At Home

24 Hour Crisis Line

In the Denver area:
(303) 852-5094

Statewide:
(888) 557-4441 ext.2
Administration (303) 839-5540



"Street Smarts"

Look for a second round of Street Smarts courses in late April 14, 21, 28 1999. The course covers basic self-defense, community building with law enforcement officers, and conflict-resolution. Call the Anti-Violence Project staff for more info. or to sign-up!

Liberté, Egalité...

Denise de Percin

The French Revolution
the U.S. Constitution

The Civil Rights Movement
The Equal Rights Amendment

Equality Begins at Home...

There is a long, repetitive, worldwide history of people struggling for basic human rights. In most of these efforts, equality has been central to the simple and powerful idea that every person deserves to be treated with fairness, decency, and respect. These efforts have often been matched by opposing violence and resistance, yet they persist.

March 21 - 27 will be the focus of yet another struggle for human rights, as activists across the country kick off Equality Begins at Home. Thursday, March 25, is Anti-Violence Day, when the Anti-Violence Project of Equality Colorado is sponsoring a number of activities to focus attention on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender victims of violence. [See box]

The timing for this series of events is apropos. Colorado has experienced more than its share of bias-motivated incidents recently. In just over a year, there have been the murders of Oumar Dia, Bruce Vanderjagt, and Matthew Shepard in nearby Laramie. Then there are the incidents that fall short of murder - like the anti-gay homecoming float at CSU. Just last week the FBI was called in to investigate three swastikas burned into the dry grass adjacent to Slavens and Cory Elementary Schools in Denver as possible hate-crimes.

Bias violence is motivated by the idea that some people are "less than" others, and consequently are not deserving of rights or protections. We know some of the usual targeted groups; there are others we don't automatically associate with targeted groups. In the "us versus them" mentality of white supremacist and secessionist organizations, people of color, government agents, GLBT people are the enemy. According to this exclusionary paranoia, elected officials, law enforcement officers, and government employees are all part of an illegal plot to abrogate individual rights.

If we focus only on how GLBT people are treated by others, it is easy to overlook that we also have a significant responsibility in creating a just society. The equality that we seek for ourselves must be reflected in our treatment of each other. This means dealing with issues of race, class, gender, gender identity, disability, and age. We must move beyond the myths and stereotypes of

Equal adj.

1. having the same rights, privileges, ability, rank, etc.
2. having the necessary ability, strength, power, capacity or courage (with to).

From Webster's New World Dictionary, 3rd Collegiate Edition

homogeneity to include everyone who is part of the GLBT community

Equality should also begin at home in our personal relationships. There is no excuse for any GLBT person or anyone else to ever be subjected to abuse or violence by a partner or family member. We need to recognize domestic violence when it happens, and support each other in getting help. It is as important to treat each other with respect as it is to expect respect from others.

The aim of Equality Begins at Home is to effect change within our communities, our schools, our neighborhoods, our churches and temples, and our workplaces. It's a simple and powerful idea: each of us can take small steps, with a result that is greater than the sum of the parts. I hope that during Equality Begins at Home, each of us will take the time to think about what we can do to bring a little more justice and equality into our lives and the lives of those around us.

Ending the Terror

Deryk Tyler Stranding

For many of us, junior high and high school were places of extreme terrorism and for some of us they still are. Along with the isolation many of us felt because GLBT people were not visible as healthy role models, several of us also faced harassment from our peers and teachers because we were perceived to be GLBT. For many of my friends and me, school was not a place that we enjoyed and oftentimes found ways to avoid. Unfortunately, not much has changed in the last eight years, since I was in school, to make schools any safer for youth that are or are perceived to be GLBT.

According to results from the 1997 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, GLB youth had an increased likelihood of being threatened or injured with a weapon, having property stolen or damaged, being in a physical fight at school within the last year and/or carrying a weapon to school in the last 30 days. Being singled out for

this level of terrorism has its tolls. Youth that are targeted for this level of harassment tend to participate in high-risk behavior. 54% of the youth who identified as GLB in this survey considered suicide in the last year; 37% of these youth actually attempted suicide and 19% required medical attention for a suicide attempt. In addition to high suicides, youth who are harassed because they are GLB are more apt to use drugs, engage in risky sexual behavior and have eating disorders when compared to non-GLB youth.

Unfortunately, the above mentioned survey does not have any statistics on transgender youth; frequently, the terrorists who harass GLB youth do so because the youth break away from typical gender-roles. Hence, transgender youth most likely experience a similar level of hatred and taunting as do GLB youth. However, studies still need to be done that include information on the experience of transgender youth in schools in order to ascertain the level of harassment they face.

Our schools are not safe places for youth who are or are perceived to be GLBT. In order to create safer learning environments for GLBT youth, the Colorado Safe Schools Coalition (CSSC) was formed. This coalition is comprised of organizations and individuals that are dedicated to making Colorado schools safer. A few of these organizations include Equality Colorado, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Community Services Center of Colorado, the Gender Identity Center, the Colorado Education Association, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, P-FLAG, Project PAVE, and many others.

The Colorado Safe Schools Coalition has three main projects in operation that focus on making schools safer for GLBT youth. The first is the Poster Project. This program centers around a flyer to be hung in schools where youth will see them. The poster states that being harassed because of one's sexual orientation is not acceptable and advertises Equality Colorado's Anti-Violence Project's crisis line number. Youth who call this number will be able to receive support and will be referred to a "safe" faculty or staff within her or his school.

The other program that the coalition is working on is the Safe School Project. This program is tailored to fit the needs of each school. A wide variety of options are available to schools: surveys to determine the level of harassment, faculty in-services and trainings, student trainings, and connections with other youth violence. Schools may request any or all of the above services the CSSC offers. Currently the CSSC is working with Boulder High School; have implemented a harassment survey at the beginning of February and will be doing faculty and student trainings throughout this semester with other violence prevention organizations in Boulder. The CSSC is also meeting with other schools in March to determine how the Colorado Safe Schools Coalition can help facilitate a safer learning environment.

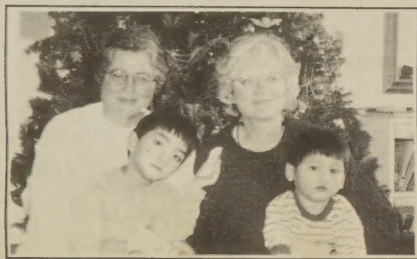
If interested in CSSC, contact Deryk Stranding, at 303-839-5540 or 888-557-4441 extension 2.

Living Our Lives with All

Matt Kailey

In the last few decades of the twentieth century, the United States has seen a major shift in how its citizens define the concept of "family." Leave it to Beaver and Father Knows Best are no longer the role models for the standard American household. Mothers work, fathers stay home, single women and men raise children on their own and GLBT singles and couples claim the right to be considered families and to bear or adopt children to raise and cherish. Laws have not kept up with the growing number of GLBT families. We are denied marriage rights and co-parenting rights for adoptive partners. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals and couples forge ahead, creating loving families despite the legal and social challenges they face. The five families featured here are just a few of many such thriving households in Colorado and the United States.

Marcia, Susan, Sam and Tim



Marcia and Susan Baird took a family name for a shared last name when they adopted Sam and Tim. The couple talked of starting a family early in their 10-year relationship and, after pursuing several options, found Adoption Alliance, the agency that helped Susan adopt Sam, now almost five, when he was four months old. A few years later, Marcia adopted Tim, who is almost three, at ten months old. Adoption Alliance was instrumental in helping Marcia and Susan work through agencies in Vietnam to bring the boys to the United States for legal adoptions. In Vietnam, the boys would be orphans. At the time Sam was adopted, orphans in Vietnam did not even have the right to receive an education. The laws of Colorado do not permit the couple to be legal adoptive co-parents to the children, as a legally married male and female could, so each woman adopted one of the children.

Sam and Tim are active, energetic and challenging children. Susan says, "Of anything I've ever done in life, this is the hardest and most satisfying." The couple says they have not experienced discrimination or prejudice in their work with Adoption Alliance, in their contact with preschools for the boys or within their families and neighborhoods. Although there are several support groups for GLBT parents, the Bairds have found a community with the group "Families with Children from Vietnam," which consists of heterosexual couples, some gay families and some single women who have adopted Vietnamese children. The group plans social and cultural events for the children to allow them to experience their heritage.

The Bairds do not feel that having two mothers is problematic for the boys. They have not questioned it, and their preschool friends come from a variety of family configurations. With two uncles, a grandfather and cousins in town who they see regularly, they have the same, perhaps more, male role models than a single mother raising boys would have. Marcia feels that "at some point, they will have issues with both having two moms and being of a different race. It's just a question of which will be the biggest issue."

Tia, Gail and Rochelle



After over four years together, Tia and Gail also adopted their daughter Rochelle, age 10 months, through Adoption Alliance's Vietnamese program. Gail is the legal adoptive parent. They specifically requested a girl because they were concerned about the lack of male role models in their own families and also felt that a female child might get a better chance in the United States than as an orphan in Vietnam. They are also members of the "Families of Children from Vietnam" support group and are finding acceptance from these families as well as their own families, neighborhood and day care. Although children at the diverse day care Rochelle attends have been asking questions about why she has two moms, the day care provider has handled this smoothly.

The couple feels that the child may have issues when she is older with having two mothers as well as being of a different race, but they plan to be open and positive with her. The family lives in a diverse neighborhood and Rochelle will attend a school with much diversity. They hope that, as the child gets older, she will not experience prejudice and discrimination, but are not optimistic. "It makes me sad that she will grow up to hear negative things about her family and parents," Gail says. "(But) she's going to be very loved."

Tia hopes that others who read about their family will know that "whether you're single or with a partner, know that you're okay to be who you are and follow your heart. We can be who we are and have a wonderful life." She continues, "We have been blessed. We count our blessings all the time."

Michael, Jim and Jamie



Michael and Jim have been together over eighteen years and adopted their daughter, Jamie, now five, when she was an infant. Michael is the legal adoptive father. They were in the delivery room at her birth. After some unsatisfactory attempts to adopt through county agencies, they registered with a private agency and received a referral through the Rocky Mountain Adoption Exchange, an adoption referral service. A young woman who specifically requested a gay couple for the adoption of her unborn child contacted the Exchange. After meeting and interviewing Michael and Jim, as well as several other couples, the woman chose the two men as adoptive parents for her child. She liked the stability of their home and their long-term relationship.

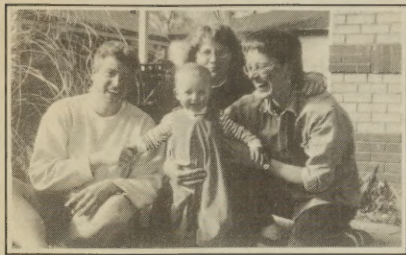
Michael and Jim had no problems with the adoption. The female judge was "very enlightened" and her only concern was that Jim be included in the process as much as possible, even though he could not be a legal adoptive co-parent. The couple feels that, in more rural areas, there could be more problems and less acceptance. There have been no difficulties with Jamie's cooperative preschool, where parents are actively involved in the classroom and Jim sits on the board. Jamie has many friends and has sleepovers with the neighbor children, while Michael and Jim assist with a school carpool and are included in all neighborhood social functions. They feel that middle school will be the biggest problem, when children tend to be cruel and tease, but they plan to select Jamie's school based on several factors, including parental involvement in school operations, a well-run PTA and available programs such as music and physical education.

Jamie's godmother is a lesbian and she and her partner, as well as aunts and the mothers of other friends, will serve as female role models. Michael and Jim intend to be honest and open with her about everything and hope that she will feel comfortable coming to them with problems in adolescence.

Like the Bairds and Tia and Gail, Michael and Jim have wills and legal papers drawn up so that if the adoptive parent should die, the surviving partner will have guardianship of the child, preventing the child from being removed from a parent and placed with strangers.

the Affirmation We Deserve

Karen, Cindy, John, Peter and Anten



Karen and Cindy had been together several years and had held a commitment ceremony when they began serious planning for a child. The decision was made that, through the use of artificial insemination, Karen would bear the child. As social workers, both women felt that a known father was important to a child. A friend, John, was interested in fathering the child. He and his partner, Peter, along with Karen and Cindy, spent four years planning and jointly saving money in preparation for Anten's birth. Over the four-year period, the two couples talked at length about all matters involving the child. A great sense of trust and responsibility developed between them and a contract was drawn up giving each of the four responsibilities for the child, as well as an agreement that each could be involved in the child's life, even in the event of a separation. Because Peter and Cindy have no legal rights to the child, the couples felt the contract was important.

After Karen became pregnant, she and Cindy bought and moved into John's house and John and Peter moved across the street so the family would be close. Cindy, John and Peter were all present in the birthing room for Anten's delivery fourteen months ago. After Anten's birth, Karen would spend nights at John's house for breast-feeding. Anten's care was divided between the two households. Money continued to be put aside for Anten's needs, with each couple contributing a certain amount every month.

The family plans to be very open with school personnel as Anten grows older. If they find a non-supportive environment they will look elsewhere. "There are a lot of gay families with children," states Cindy. "People will have to adapt." Their desire is for Anten to be raised with other children with gay parents. They are involved in a support group for gay parents and are setting up a playgroup for the children. All have found their families and friends supportive.

Although John and Peter have split up, Peter continues to pay child support for Anten and also has visitation once a week. John understands the difficulties of finding a new partner but states, "My priority is my son." Wills and legal papers would give Cindy guardianship if something happened to both Karen and John, and each of the four have extended family who would be involved in Anten's life.

"It really does feel like we are a family," states Karen. "We've been through rough times, good times, we love each other like a family."

Christa, Nick and A.J.



Nick Sarchet is a female-to-male transsexual who gave birth to A.J., now five, prior to his transition to the male gender. He met Christa Kriesel a year ago and the two plan a commitment ceremony this summer. Although the two can legally marry due to Nick's gender change, they choose not to at this time due to financial reasons regarding A.J. and to stand in solidarity with other friends who cannot legally marry. Christa also feels that, if they did legally marry and Nick's transsexual status came to light, "the legislature would pass a Tinky Winky law" preventing such future marriages. Christa identified as a lesbian prior to meeting Nick and the couple now identify as "queer." They do not wish to be seen as a heterosexual couple, although they are on most occasions. "Being with Nick has not let me experience homophobia day to day," Christa states. "We can hold hands in public." When the couple took A.J. to the emergency room recently, the doctor assumed Christa was the biological mother, talking only to her about A.J.'s care.

Most people assume that Nick is the biological father of A.J. and often asked about the biological mother. The couple is "out" about their status when necessary. They don't feel the need to announce to everyone that Nick is transsexual, although he is very active in the GLBT community.

Prior to Nick's transition, A.J. called him "mom" but now refers to him as "dad," referring to his biological father as "my Albuquerque dad" and to Christa as "mom" or "Christa." When asked in church to draw a picture of his house and family, A.J. drew a picture including Nick ("dad"), Christa ("mom"), himself, his "Albuquerque dad," Nick's parents and Christa's parents. "A.J. has an expanded view of family," states Nick. "He has people all over the United States who care about him."

If something happened to Nick, "the law is not on Christa's side." A.J.'s biological father in Albuquerque and other biological family would be looked at. Nick's parents struggled with coming to their commitment ceremony this summer--they find it difficult to accept his

transsexual status. Christa's parents "love him" and accept him as male and are aware that he is TS. A. J. has adjusted well to the situation and to the loving family he has.

All the same-sex couples interviewed have stated they would legally marry if they could. All have drawn up legal paperwork for the protection of their partners and children. All couples presented here consider themselves family. And all have had to go to lengths that legally married heterosexual couples would not in order to preserve their rights and the rights of their children.

Want To Learn More About Adoption?

If you are interested in learning more about adoption, especially with regard to the GLBT community, check out the website "A Colorado Family" @

www.dimensional.com/~tennco/index.htm.

Jon and Dave, a Denver couple who adopted sons Matthew and Sean, have created this website to educate others about their own adoption experience as well as to provide numerous links to informational sites. Be prepared to spend an afternoon reading about this fascinating family and hooking up to the many links which provide information and research regarding parenting, legal issues, resources and frequently asked questions. This extensive site has won several awards and is a must-see for all GLBT persons interested in adoption.

"Loves Makes A Family" Exhibit Comes to Boulder County

The nationally acclaimed traveling photograph-text exhibit representing the lives of twenty families, comes to Boulder for most of March and April.

March 4 (Thursday 3-5:30 pm) Opening reception.

March 13 (Saturday, 9 am - 5 pm) Valuing Diversity: Educators Workshop.

March 20 (Saturday, 9:30 am - Noon) Bringing Families Together: Learning to Respect Differences.

March 28 (Sunday, 1 - 2:30 pm) Love Makes A Family: The Reality. Panel discussion.

April 10 (Saturday, 8 am - 7 pm) Seventh Annual Lambda Rising Conference.

April 12 (Monday, Noon- 2 pm) A Picture Paints a Thousand Words: Using Art for Social Change.

April 13 (Tuesday, 7:30 - 9 pm) Love Makes a Family: The Reality. Panel discussion.

April 17-18 Brian McNaught at UCC Church in Longmont. Call 303.776.4940 for more details.

For more information, contact Jean Hodges, Boulder PFLAG at 303.444.4580 or Bev Tuel at the GLBT Resource Center, CU-Boulder, 303.492.1377.

Community

Forum

For Better or Worse, But Not Equal

Sally Jo Button

That's right. Without the legal rights of marriage, couples fair better AND worse under the federal and Colorado tax codes. Under the income tax laws, unmarried taxpayers are sometimes better off and sometimes worse...it depends on the difference between the income levels of the two taxpayers. Under the estate tax laws, unmarried taxpayers are almost always MUCH worse off.

INCOME TAXES: It seems unmarrieds have many more opportunities with two tax returns to manipulate the tax laws (legally) in their favor. Planning can make a BIG difference! Undoubtedly, you care about income taxes. After all, you have to pay them today; and paying less is always preferable. For years, and even today, legislators have referred to the "marriage penalty" inborn in the tax code. Theoretically, the system creates more tax for married taxpayers than for two single taxpayers. If this were true, why would we choose to be married, only to pay more in tax? Well, sometimes, singles actually pay less than marrieds!

Couple One: Both earn \$50,000. Married, they pay \$18,484 in federal taxes. For two singles, the bill is only \$17,357. BETTER.

Couple Two: One earns \$80,000 and the other, \$20,000. The married couple pays \$18,484 while singles have to ante up \$19,336! WORSE.

Couple Three: One earns \$40,000 and the other \$20,000. Marrieds pay \$7,649 while the singles pay \$7,821. WORSE.

Couple Four: Both earning social security income. If married, taxes are due on social security benefits when joint income reaches \$32,000. But two singles can enjoy \$24,000 of income (each) before social security benefits are taxed. BETTER.

Retirement plan laws hurt unmarried couples. At divorce, to divide assets equitably, a spouse may receive a distribution from an ex's retirement plan without penalty. Not so with unmarrieds. If you have to take cash out of a retirement plan to even things up before age 59 1/2, the 10% early penalty is due along with taxes. At death, a spouse can rollover the deceased spouse's retirement plan and delay income taxes. Not so with unmarrieds...non-spouse beneficiaries must begin taxable distributions within a year. In addition, non-spouses have no special rights to social security or a deceased's defined benefit pension plan.

The percentage of tax you pay on your income depends on the level of that income. The more you earn the higher the percentage of tax. These "brackets" begin at 15%; then they almost double to 28% and increase slowly up to 39%. Financial professionals concentrate on high net worth

clients so that many tax planners ignore the opportunities available to prevent the early doubling of taxes. For singles in 1999, taxes jump from 15% to 28% when your taxable income reaches \$25,750. Managing your taxable income close to this level pays handsomely!

Seek tax help. Go as a couple with all your information and ask to pay the least tax possible. Many professionals in our community know the tax laws well and can find opportunities to save. Especially if you see yourselves as one financial unit, you can often shift tax deductions to the higher earner, saving 28% and income to the lower earner, paying 15%. File your returns and reconcile the tax difference between you later. You will win and the IRS will receive less. Even if you have already filed for 1998, seek advice about how to arrange your assets for the 1999-tax year.

ESTATE TAXES: Hazardous results from the estate laws do and will effect you. The author believes you need to beware of estate taxes. Estate taxes are levied when assets of a deceased pass to a non-spouse. A spouse, on the other hand, can receive an unlimited amount of lifetime transfers and in inheritance with NO estate tax being due. This represents a grave imbalance in equality for unmarried couples.

see page 9

Colorado Business Council

'A GLB and GLB-Friendly Chamber of Commerce'

Elfriede Leicht

When we moved to Denver in July of 1992, we knew not a soul. Needless to say, my partner and I were in shock to learn a few months later that we now lived in the "hate state"! Post Amendment 2, I started looking for a gay group where I could network in our community - socially, politically and for business. To my delight, I found 3 great organizations - Rocky Mountain Career Women, Webwork (which is now defunct - but what a fine lesbian networking group we were!) and Colorado Business Council (CBC). I joined CBC in 1995 and I've found myself reaping more and more benefits and have now served on the board for almost 2 years.

The Colorado Business Council is the statewide equal opportunity Chamber of Commerce for GLBT and GLBT friendly businesses. The CBC was established in 1992 to: provide a voice of the gay business and professional community; provide a support system for members to meet professionally and socially; promote and enhance members' organizations/businesses to the community at large. CBC hosts a monthly luncheon and after-hours mixer and publishes a monthly newsletter and business member directory. CBC's website is another tool to get connected and advertise (www.cobusco.org) as well as the annual business fair. In 1997, CBC

inaugurated its annual Gay & Lesbian Business Awards Event and it has become its largest and most visible undertaking. I've had ice cream at Lika's production plant at one mixer; saw Love! Valour! Compassion! on a CBC outing; heard Tim Gill give some profound insights on his business and life at a luncheon; enjoyed the rooftop view of Cheesman at the annual summer pool party. Oh yeah - I've also gotten more business and made more friends in the GLBTQ community! I've watched CBC build bridges within and outside of our community.

Marie Tapp founded CBC in 1992. Since its founding, CBC officers have been a who's who of talent from our community (Trish Bangert, Brian Bazinet, Julie Boardman, Brook Bollinger, Debbie Brundage, Mary Celeste, Julian Ebben-Ross, Kathy Fields, Linda Fowler, Sheila Gant, Debra Gray, C. Scott Hagler, Trina Hoefling, Karen Jessey, Michael Johnson, Kelly Koza, Amanda Masters, Don Mathias, Melody Ortega, Ken Parks, Rich Patterson, Ed Pearl, Lea Ann Purvis, Shannon Sandidge, Bob Schlaff, Michael Schneider, John Skrabec, Steve Starr, Beth Wampler, Marianne Weidlein) Whew! Quite a roster of alumni and please forgive my research if your name is missing. There's also a good chance

that a missing name means that person is still on the board!

Like any organization, CBC has had its share of growing pains but it continues to grow (currently at 178 members) and in my opinion, improve. Over the last few years, CBC has attracted great speakers: Tim Gill, Andrea Hollen, Susan Kirkpatrick, Dottie Lamm, Don Mares, Brian McNaught, Patricia Barela Rivera, Gail Schoettler, Mayor Webb. Our members also provide great talks and business information - people like Sally Jo Button, Tom Dearth, Rick Evans, Teri Lyn Dion, Jonathan Kelley, Scott Schell and Lisa Vorhees, to name just a few.

Upcoming events include: March 25th mixer at Out Front Colorado and the business fair on April 22nd. Please join us. Check the website (www.cobusco.org) or call the hotline for more information and a complete calendar of events, 303-595-8042.

Elfriede Leicht, CBC Board Member At-Large and Mortgage Banker with Temple-Inland Mortgage Corporation

Etc.

Anti-Semitism & Heterosexism cont.

Similarly, religious attacks on homosexuals, defended by appeal to biblical precedent, echo the vilest forms of anti-Semitism. The slanders of "impurity" and "sodomy" have replaced "Christ-killers" in the vocabulary of hatred, and victimizing the victim has, once again, become the excuse to justify Heaven's retribution toward a minority community. Even the promise of salvation through conversion reflects the common perception that both group share a common designation: "outcasts in the sight of G-d." The stereotype of stubborn adherence to a despised lifestyle, even in the shadow of salvation, is also a common accusatory theme. After all, how can the Other want to be who they are, and stubbornly hold on to a life of deprivation when the doors are, figuratively, open to a life of safety, privilege, and saving grace?

To look at the language of marginalization without noticing historical connections would mean yielding to ignorance. Common weapons of oppression include the emasculation and defeminization (or sexualization) of Jews and homosexuals to perpetuate an excuse for dehumanization and a perception of facile targeting for violence. Thus, Jewish men are labeled Hymies, nerds, and weaklings, just as Gay men are the sissies and girls--to mention only a few of the epithets hurled at them--while, Jewish women and lesbians are, respectively, bitches or princesses, butches and dykes. The modern propaganda of hatred even uses terms that reflect Hitler's racial anti-Semitism; the metaphors of sickness, disease, contagion, and contamination, made more grotesque in light of the AIDS epidemic, are frightening reminders of past genocide and the excuses for a violent present. The recent push to find a biological origin for homosexuality also presents a philosophical dilemma, as genetic pre-determination looms as another reason for the eugenics response to homosexuality, just as it was for the "Jewish problem".

So, what are the lessons reflected in these mirrored images? That the defense against fundamentalism is openness, confidence, and passion against injustice. That there must be vigilance against the erosion of civil rights. That it takes commitment and work to undo external and institutionalized oppression and to unlearn internalized oppression. That equality comes through coalition building and alliances with all who struggle against oppression, in social and legal arenas, and by supporting leaders, leadership, and institutions that work toward shared power and resources and against the weapons of oppression; against violence, disenfranchisement, and marginalization.

Moshe Rozdzial, Ph.D., is a research scientist and psychotherapist, currently the school administrator for the Boulder Jewish Renewal Community and member of the National Council of the National Organization of Men Against Sexism (NOMAS).

For Better or Worse cont.

Under current law, nothing is due until an estate of the decedent exceeds \$650,000. It seems the young or those who are just beginning to accumulate capital can temporarily ignore such an issue. But too many of you are ignoring the issue. While \$650,000 seems like more money than you'll ever have, just spend a moment to add up the following. All of your life insurance, the total value of your jointly owned house (only half of it is included for marrieds), all of your retirement plan values, etc. Now you may be surprised at how close to an estate tax bill you are.

Next, you may think, "I'll just transfer the assets over \$650,000 to my partner now, so I won't die with enough to pay taxes." Nope, they thought of that. The tax code is a Unified Gift and Estate Tax Law. Assets passed during life are brought back into the equation. Ergo the problem of putting your lover's name on the house without consideration for the tax laws. Beware of transferring anything with more than \$10,000 of value, in any calendar year.

Estate taxes vary, but a good rule of thumb is 50%. Yes, 50% of your estate in excess of \$650,000 is due in taxes within 9 months of death. Where will the cash come from? Were you and your lover to have had most of your wealth tied up in a home and/or a business, you can see that a forced liquidation could cause a good deal of turmoil for the survivor.

The most common strategy for managing an estate tax bill between unmarried couples is a life insurance policy owned in an Irrevocable Life Insurance Trust. Other techniques may serve you well, including a partnership agreement when assets are jointly owned. The language in these agreements can ultimately save much in tax bills and aggravation.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Know both of your tax brackets. Work hard to reduce 28% taxes but not to save only 15%. Concentrate efforts there. If one of you is paying 15% and the other 28%, planning can make a big difference!
2. Take a non-working partner as a dependent.
3. Instead of splitting the deductions on real estate, one can claim all of the home mortgage interest and charitable deductions while the other uses the standard deduction. The other could claim the rental property on his/her return.
4. The lower tax bracket partner owns investments, which create taxable income and a Roth, while a higher bracket partner maximizes out on deductible retirement plans.
5. Beware of adding names to home titles or investment accounts. This constitutes a transfer and lifetime gift.
6. Seek legal counsel when co-owning property from one knowledgeable about unmarried couple laws. (Equality Colorado or CLIP can provide you with legal referrals in our community that can advise you on that very matter.)
7. If there are children in the household, even more can potentially be saved with good tax planning.

Sally Jo Button, CFP, Med, MS, has served the Denver gay and lesbian community with fee based financial planning and money management services since 1981.

Etc.

The Gill Foundation's OutGiving Project and Equality Colorado

present

for all board members, staff and volunteers.

• **Fundraising Fundamentals:** Are we having FUND\$ yet? Learn the 9 basic ways to raise money and discover how to diversify your funding base.

• **Ask! People for Money Face to Face.** Find out who gives away money (they're people you know), discover the easy way to ask, and make rejection your friend.

• **Dive into Development Planning.** Learn the 8 steps to a successful development plan and identify new donor audiences.

WHEN: Friday, April 16, 1999
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Where: First Unitarian Church
1400 Lafayette St.
(Denver)

Coaches: Julie Enszer and Russell D. Roybal
OutGiving Evangelists
Gill Foundation

Cost: \$10

RSVP: Sue Anderson, Equality CO
303-839-5540 or email:
susanea@aol.com

Additional trainings:

May 21: Asking for Big Bucks Again and Again

Sept. 10: Advocate! Non-Profits Can

Oct. 15: Community Organizing Training

Equity Fund

'Money Makes the World Go Around'

Building a movement for social change takes time and it takes money. People in our community are finding creative ways to give towards that purpose. At Equality Colorado we'll assist you in finding ways to give within your ability and aligned with your interests. Whether it be through the workplace, special events, or being an individual donor through our Equity Fund, there are so many ways one person can make a contribution. Contact our Development office to find out how your resources can help us build a stronger and more informed community.

Joanna Dueñas, Development Director, 303.839.5540

"Going to the Chapel, and We're Going to Get Married..."

Charlie and Matthew Morris-Price celebrated their union on January 17, 1999. The ceremony was important to them because it demonstrated their commitment to each other and to family and friends in a very public and affirming way. In lieu of gifts, the happy couple requested that donations go to support Equality's work. The generous donations raised on Charlie and Matthew's behalf was \$2200. The staff and Board of Equality Colorado thank Charlie and Matthew and their family and friends for their



"The importance of this ceremony is not how the law defines it, but how we define it."
Charlie and Matthew Morris-Price

Corporate Sponsorship Program Launched

Equality Colorado has launched its first ever corporate sponsorship campaign. As a business person, here's your opportunity to maximize your exposure to a broad base of GLBT households while knowing that your advertising dollars go towards supporting our community! We offer businesses innovative and numerous ways to reach our GLBT statewide community.

Contact Joanna Dueñas at 303.839.5540 ext. 5 to inquire about corporate sponsorship.

Matching Gifts

Does your employer have a **matching gifts program**? Many companies will match gifts given by their employees to non-profit organizations. Equality Colorado is a tax-exempt organization, qualified to receive such gifts.

Contact Joanna Dueñas at 303.839.5540 ext. 5 to inquire about how to set-up a matching program at your workplace.

Community Shares of Colorado

Did you know that Equality Colorado is a member of **Community Shares of Colorado**, a federation of diverse non-profit organizations which conduct workplace campaign throughout the entire state? Giving to Community Shares is another way to give to Equality Colorado via your workplace. If your workplace is already a CSC site, contact them about becoming a workplace "Friend." It's fun. It's easy. It works.

For more information about community Shares of Colorado, contact 303.861.7507.

Equality Begins At Home

Are you home?

On March 16-17 and 23-24 Board members, staff and volunteers will be calling you during its annual telethon campaign.

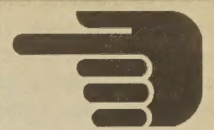
We're looking forward to talking to you and giving you updates about our legislative advocacy, Anti-Violence Project, Voices of Faith and field organizing work to date. There's a lot happening in our state-wide community and we want to share the news with you and hear what you have to say about matters of concern to you and your family.

Empress Twyla to Raise Money for Equality

Empress Twyla Westheimer (AKA: Jeff Wilhelm) is running for Imperial Court (Denver). She has designated Equality Colorado as a beneficiary of her fundraiser to be held on March 28, Sunday, at B.J.'s Carousel (1380 S. Broadway). For more information, contact B.J.'s at 303.777.9880.

We hope you'll support both Twyla and Equality!

Equality Colorado Wish List



Many thanks to those of you who read our wish list and actually sent in wonderful donations for our various offices.

Special thanks to Ed Cable and Clair Kaplan for their generous donations of a laptop computer and typewriter for our field department.

We could still use:

- office supplies (any kind)
- copy paper
- flip chart and easel
- TV/VCR
- \$\$\$
- Volunteers to staff events and do office work

J. Ryan Kennedy, MA, ADTR, LPC, RN, CACIII

- Individual, Couples & Family Therapy
- Recovery from Addictions
- Ending Relationship Abuse



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Yes! I want to support Equality Colorado's work to secure equality for all....no exceptions.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

☐ I am interested in Equality's Equity Fund sustainer giving program.
Please send me information.

☐ I would like to make a donation of:
_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 other \$ _____

Checks should be made payable to *Equality Colorado*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to which contributions are tax-deductible OR you can charge your donation to your:

VISA or MasterCard (circle one) Card # _____

Expiration date: _____ Signature _____

Return to: Equality Colorado, PO Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203 (303) 839-5540

Out and About

Equality in the Field

On the Ground in Colorado Springs and Southern Colorado

Christy Pitts

Our city election on April 6th was looking fairly unexciting until last week when it became truly bizarre! Will Perkins, former head of Colorado For Family Values, has decided to run for Mayor. Perkins has identified himself over the years as a, truly, one issue candidate. Colorado for Family Values refuses to admit defeat, even though they have continually failed to promote their intolerant agenda in Colorado Springs time and time again. We are looking forward to this election!

Equality Begins at Home: March 21-27. Colorado Springs will kick off EBAH with a "Springs Into Equality" concert/fund-raiser at the Pride Center on Saturday March 20th. The Pride Center is located at 125 N. Parkside and the concert will begin at 8pm and go until midnight. "The Unfocused Family" will be providing the musical entertainment. There is a \$5 donation at the door and there will be beer, wine, and soda available for a donation. On Monday, March 22nd our book study group will begin. "Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity" will be discussed on three consecutive Mondays (3/22, 3/29, and 4/5) from 7-8:30pm at the Pride Center. On Saturday, March 27th, Equality will host an evening at The Warehouse (25 W. Cimarron) along with Fusion! and Stonewall Democrats. All candidates for the city election (at-large council seats and mayor) will be invited and the Equality Voter Guide will be available. Wouldn't it be great if Will Perkins decided to grace us with his presence!

City Elections: We have decided to do two GOTV days two weeks before the election. The first day will be Saturday, March 27th and the 2nd day will be Saturday, April 3rd. We will spend both days going door to door with the Citizen's Project Candidate's Survey and Equality's Voter Guide. We need lots of people to help out on both of these days. Any time you can spare would be greatly appreciated. We will also be doing 3 days of voter registration at the colleges in town next week.

In March, Samantha Frazee, an AmeriCorp Vista volunteer, will be joining the Colorado Springs office. I am looking forward to having someone else in the office and am excited about having Samantha on board!

Anti-Violence Project:

Dede and I just returned from Salida, where we had a great time. Salida is a wonderful town and has a very involved, caring community. This trip was to provide anti-violence training for service providers in that area. Plans are being made to return in April to do a full training with the police department and with advocates involved with domestic violence.

In May, we will be collaborating with Planned Parenthood to offer an evening of training for service providers within Planned Parenthood and other groups. A daylong training will follow that for members of the community focusing on domestic violence, hate crimes, and health care for lesbians.

On the Ground in the Front Range, Eastern and Southwestern Region

Hope Artichoker

Hello all, this is Hope the statewide community organizer, not to be confused with Christy Pitts the Colorado Springs community organizer. This is a brief update on the things that I am going to be working on in the coming months. I would love any help or input on any of these things, please feel free to contact me at any point with ideas. As you all know I am new to Colorado and wanted to thank you all for your warm greetings and words of encouragement. As I have said, I am happy to be here and look forward to working with all of you.

By mid-March I will have completed one swing through the state trying to connect with folks. Hopefully, if I haven't met you by then I will soon. My trip through the state will be a combination of outreach for our Equality Begins At Home events and a general meet and greet of folks around the state. I will also be giving people legislative updates about our Hate Crimes Bill and Civil Rights Bill, both of which have come out of House Judiciary and are headed for House Appropriations. If you can, please contact your legislators to encourage passing these bills.

I am also looking for folks to take part in a marriage action event during Equality Begins At Home. We are trying to find couples who on Wednesday, March 24 will go and apply for marriage licenses. If this is of interest to you please let me know. We would like to find a couple in every county of Colorado.

We will also be kicking off a "Stop the Violence" campaign during the last part of March and early April. A part of this campaign is going to be a passport project. This project is modeled after a similar outreach tool used by the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. We are looking for people to submit stories of hate crimes or violence committed against themselves or someone they know. We will put the story into a passport format with information on how to report violence and other resources available for victims of violence. This project has great potential not only as outreach tool but also for peoples personal stories to further illustrate the need for legislative protection.

We are also beginning the planning process for our annual statewide conference which will combine Justice Now with Voices of Faith. It's a two in one deal. The conference will be held in Colorado Springs this year. The dates for the conference are October 15-17, 1999. I hope that all of you will plan on attending this conference. It's an incredible opportunity for us to come together to create a common agenda and move forward as a community. Who can say "no" to such an opportunity?

*To place an ad in The Equal Times,
call Joanna at (303) 839-5540*

On the Ground in Grand Junction and the Western Region

Kathryn Christian

Beginning rather auspiciously in late October, in the wake of Matthew Shepard's murder, the way had already been paved for bringing the anti-violence message to Colorado's western slope. Once getting my foot in the door, I find little resistance to the information I have to impart. This holds true with human service workers, law enforcement, public school personnel, and the people I have known nearly all my life here.

Initially I have found people working in the human services field to be the most open to receiving the information we're extending; for most it seems that the objectives of the Anti-Violence Project are a foregone conclusion. Partners, Inc. has been especially supportive regarding the Colorado Safe Schools Coalition (CSSC). Similarly, the school-based counselors with Colorado West Mental Health want to be known as safe contacts for kids experiencing problems. Generally, human service workers are not only supportive but quite well-informed regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) matters and concerns.

Individually, school personnel also tend to be in favor of ending anti-GLBT behavior at school. Although, I have yet to obtain official support from the school district for instituting CSSC in the schools here, the people I have talked with who actually work in the schools, would like to see this program brought in. We have begun to identify, with the help of the kids, safe contacts within the schools and have also been helped immensely by the Equity Consultant for the school district. Recently we were interviewed by students at Palisade High School for possible El Pomar Foundation funding for CSSC.

Perhaps the most surprising inroads to date have been with law enforcement personnel. It seems that once that door was opened a bit (probably my hardest task so far), the need for training regarding violence within and committed upon the GLBT community has been acknowledged and addressed. Tentatively, training with local law enforcement will begin in April.

For the most part, I think that the larger community is to be commended for its willingness to address GLBT matters that have traditionally been awkward, at best, to deal with. Undoubtedly, the image of the terrible violence in Wyoming is a compelling one to that effect. Fortunately, the Anti-Violence Project had an articulate and well-conceived program already in place.

To contact our field offices:

- Christy Pitts - 719.227.8545 or email: ecsprings@aol.com
- Hope Artichoker: 303.839.5540 or email: echopea@aol.com
- Kathryn Christian - 970.242.8949 or email: ecjunction@aol.com

Notable Quotables

Note to readers: The controversy that erupted when the Rev. Jerry Falwell's asserted that Tinky Winky, the rotund Teletubby with a triangular antennas, is a gay role model, created a media phenomena. It again reminds us that people will inevitably show their "true colors" if given a chance. We could not resist including the extra quotes...some of our favorites.

"Tinky Winky has the voice of a boy and carries a purse...He is purple – the gay-pride color; and his antenna is shaped like a triangle – the gay-pride symbol. As a Christian, I feel that role modeling the gay lifestyle is damaging to the moral lives of children."

Rev. Jerry Falwell, in a recent statement trying to "out" Tinky Winky, suggesting the purple, purse-toting character on television's Teletubbies children's show is homosexual

"Jerry Falwell is no longer taken seriously in the political arena, so now he has to go after cartoon characters. If Tinky Winky the Teletubby cannot measure up to Mr. Falwell's standards of morality, than whom among us can? A quick review of cartoon characters reveals that Barney is purple – is he next on Falwell's list? The simple truth is that despite Tinky Winky's and Barney's purpleness, they deserve the same love and support enjoyed by other cartoon characters."

Carol Shields, President of People for the American Way Foundation in response to Falwell's assertion that Tinky Winky is gay

"Had we ever suspected that some evil man would make this something bad, we would have never done this. This is not a bad thing for kids."

Ken Viselman, president of Itsy Bitsy entertainment, the company that produces the "Teletubbies."

"Thank you, Jerry Falwell for unmasking the gay agenda. It's about sneaking that wishy-washy idea of 'getting along' into the mainstream. I know if I had a friend inclined to play with dolls instead of trucks or carry a handbag instead of being a manly toddler, I wouldn't respect his preferences and try to get along. First I'd suggest, then demand, that he butch up. Then I'd be forced to beat him silly until he abandons the pocketbook."

Joanne Ostrow, Radio/TV columnist, Denver Post

"Ever since Rev. Jerry Falwell opened my eyes to the great homosexual conspiracy by showing me how even children's programs can be used to subvert our society, I've been looking for the more insidious forms of this horrid agenda. And guess what! I found a glaring example right here in our own beloved metroplex.

Why, do you realize that Texas (so-called) Christian University sports teams wear purple! That's right, a school that professes to be Christian actively promoting the homosexual agenda.

And it gets worse! Do you know the names of the TCU mascot? That's right – a horny toad – Need I say more? Well there is more. The toad's head is triangular shaped. Can there be any other explanation except that TCU is a hot bed of gay activism? I think not!"

James Coleman, Dallas Morning News

Other Notable Quotables.....

"The anti-Christ is alive, disabled, in his 30s, and Jewish."

Rev. Jerry Falwell in a recent article describing the Second Coming of Christ

"If Reggie White wants to make the ludicrous assertion that God affects the outcome of football games, he should at least be consistent. After a year of verbally bashing gays, Mr. White should take the Packers' loss to San Francisco this season (one of the most gay-friendly cities in the world) as a message from God."

Benjamin Zebley, Los Angeles Times

"It is clear that reform of state schooling will not solve the educational crisis; therefore, we must end government compulsion in education funding, attendance and content. Separation of school and state is essential to restore parental responsibility and create an environment of educational freedom in which both students and teachers can flourish."

U.S. Rep. Tom Tancredo ® and state Sen. John Andrew ® of Colorado in a joint statement calling for the elimination of all public schools

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